

novelty, that the four or five days seem an age. . . . We are great lions here, as you may imagine, but have not been anywhere, though we have received several invitations, preferring the relaxation of our own society, and smoking Latakia, which as a source of amusement, I suppose, will last a week. I like Bath very much. Bulwer and I went in late to one public ball, and got quite mobbed.

LONDON,
Jan.
29.

I dined with Bulwer *en famille* on Sunday, 'to meet some truffles' — very agreeable company. His mother-in-law, Mrs. Wheeler, was there; not so pleasant, something between Jeremy Bentham and Meg Merrilies, very clever, but awfully revolutionary. She poured forth all her systems upon my novitiate ear, and while she advocated the rights of woman, Bulwer abused system-mongers and the sex, and Rosina played with her dog.

Feb. 7.

Went to the House of Commons to hear Bulwer adjourn the House: was there yesterday during the whole debate — one of the finest we have had for years. Bulwer spoke, but he is physically disqualified for an orator; and, in spite of all his exertions, never can succeed. He was heard with great attention, and is evidently backed by a party. Heard Macaulay's best speech, Sheil and Charles Grant. Macaulay admirable; but, between ourselves, I could floor them all. This *entre nous*; I was never more confident of anything than that I could carry everything before me in that House. The time will come. . . . G-rey spoke highly of my oratorical powers to Bulwer, said he never heard 'finer command of words.' *Ixion* is thought the best thing I ever wrote.

Ixion in Heaven was one of several short pieces which, he contributed about this time to the *New Monthly*, a magazine owned by Colburn, of which. Bulwer was the editor. A companion piece *The Infernal Marriage* was published in the following year. Light, satirical dialogues conceived in the manner of Lucian, they are reminiscences, as has been noted before, of Disraeli's schoolboy admiration for that author, though they surpass even Lucian in the audacity of their persiflage. There was an element

¹ *Letters*, pp. 79, 80.